

**BEFORE THE  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
OF THE  
STATE OF INDIANA**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

<b>YOUTH DEER SEASON</b>	)	<b>Administrative Cause</b>
	)	<b>Number 09-019D</b>
	)	<b>(LSA Document # 09-60(F))</b>

**REPORT OF PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENTS,  
AND RECOMMENDATION REGARDING FINAL ADOPTION**

**1. RULE PROCESSING**

The Department, through its Division of Fish and Wildlife, proposed the rule amendment to 312 IAC 9-3-4 to allow a youth hunter to take either an antlered or antlerless deer during the special youth deer season.

The Natural Resources Commission (*NRC*) gave preliminary adoption to the rule package on January 13, 2009.

A “Notice of Intent” to adopt the proposed rule amendment was posted to the INDIANA REGISTER database website as 20090128-IR-312090060NIA on January 28, 2009. The notice identified Linnea Petercheff, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife, as the “small business regulatory coordinator” for purposes of Indiana Code § 4-22-2-28.1.

A fiscal analysis was prepared in association with the proposed rule package. The Department determined that the proposed amendments will have no fiscal impacts.

The fiscal analyses, a copy of the proposed rule language and a copy of the posted Notice of Intent were submitted to the Office of Management and Budget on January 30, 2009. In a letter dated May 22, 2009, Christopher A. Ruhl, Director, Office of Management and Budget, recommended that the proposed rule amendments be approved.

The NRC Division of Hearings submitted the rule proposal to the Legislative Services Agency (*LSA*) along with the “Statement Concerning Rules Affecting Small Business” on July 13, 2009. The Notice of Public Hearing was submitted to LSA on July 15, 2009. The Notice of Public Hearing, along with the Economic Impact Statement and the text of the proposed rule was posted to the INDIANA REGISTER database website on July 22, 2009. Following receipt of an “Authorization to Proceed” from LSA on July 15, 2009, the NRC Division of Hearings also caused a Notice of Public Hearing to be published by the Indianapolis Newspapers, a newspaper of general circulation in Marion County Indiana, on July 21, 2009 with respect to the public hearing conducted on August 13, 2009. In addition, the notice of the public hearing scheduled for August 13, 2009 and a summary of the proposed rule changes were published on the Commission’s web-based electronic calendar.

## **2. REPORT OF PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENTS**

### **a) Public Hearing Comments**

The public hearing was conducted as scheduled on August 13, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at McCormicks Creek State Park, Canyon Inn, Oak Room, 451 McCormicks Creek Park Road, Spencer, Indiana. Hearing Officer, Sandra Jensen, was present along with Linnea Petercheff of the Department’s Division of Fish and Wildlife and Major Steve Hunter of the Department’s Division of Law Enforcement. Five members of the public appeared and three offered comments that are summarized here.

#### **Alan Mears, Fountain County, Indiana**

Mr. Mears stated that he is all for the rule amendment as proposed. He added that his son has had an opportunity two years to take a buck and couldn’t. Mr. Mears noted that he has discussed this with Conservation Officers and has been told that the main concern is that fathers will go out and take an antlered deer and use their son’s or daughter’s youth license to tag it. Mr. Mears observed that hunters who abide by the rules will abide by the rules and hunters that don’t abide by the rules never will and stated his opinion that this rule will not have an impact in that area.

#### **Jack Corpuz, Indianapolis, Indiana**

Mr. Corpuz stated that he was among an ad hoc group of individuals that, in 2005, proposed several youth license ideas to the Department. One of those proposals was for the establishment of a youth deer season. He advised that the original proposal would not have prohibited youths hunting during the youth season from taking an antlered deer. Mr. Corpuz stated that he would like to see this rule proposal adopted to bring this youth season back to what was originally proposed to the Department.

**Jeff Weedling**, Mooresville, Indiana

Mr. Weedling stated that he agreed with everything stated by Mr. Corpuz.

**b) Comments Received Outside Public Hearing**

The following written comments were received from members of the public outside of the public hearing held on August 13, 2009.

**Bobby Hardwick**, Mitchell, Indiana (email: January 23, 2009)

I agree with the proposed change to make the Youth deer hunt either sex. I also believe that if a buck is taken during the youth season it should be in addition to the regular archery/firearm/muzzleloader buck.

**Roger Eubank**, Howard County, Indiana (email: January 23, 2009)

Please allow our kids to enjoy this youth weekend to its fullest extent. I had a chance to let my son shoot his first buck last season and had to turn it down. That was a total heartbreak for him. This buck was only a spike. So please consider the rules change for the kids sake.

**Steve Griffey**, Peru, Indiana (email: January 23, 2009)

I would like to offer my input on the rule changes proposed for the Indiana Youth season. I whole heartedly SUPPORT letting our youth hunters have an either sex tag for the youth season. I just as strongly DO NOT support allowing firearms to be loaded after legal shooting hours are over.

**Nicole Piel**, Kokomo, Indiana (email: January 23, 2009)

I am in favor of the following proposed changes: Allowing youth under the age of 18 to participate in the youth season deer hunt; and allowing youth to take either sex deer.

**Todd Doty**, Cass County, Indiana (email: January 25, 2009)

Being a parent of a young hunter I would like to see the rule of ether sex of deer to be taken during youth season as far as the loaded firearms go i should not be change. Thanks for the time.

**James Earl Warren**, Clark County, Indiana (email: January 23, 2009)

I am a lifetime member of the Indiana Hunter Ed Association. President of Clark Co. Chapter of the National Wild Turkey association. Also on the Indiana state board of directors for the National Wild Turkey Association. I love the 1 buck rule, and I think the youth season is the best thing Indiana has done in a long time. I believe the kids

should have the opportunity to harvest a buck. It could make a memory that would last a lifetime. Why anyone would be so selfish to try to save the bucks for themselves, they probably don't have kids, and should not reproduce.

**Paul Vice**, Seymour, Indiana (email: January 30, 2009)

I support PART of this proposal. That part allowing the youth deer season to have a one deer, either sex, bag limit. I oppose the idea of changing the age limit of youth only seasons from "under 16 at time of hunt" to "under 18 at time of hunt". The youth seasons should be the absolute safest timeframe for youth hunters to be in the field. The new proposal, as written, will allow a couple high school age seniors to participate without adult supervision. I would suggest the DNR either leave the age limit alone....or raise the age of the supervising hunter to 21.

**Mark Lyon**, Johnson County, Indiana (email: January 29, 2009)

I would vote to approve. If a buck walks out in the youth season, you shouldn't have to tell your son/daughter that they can't shoot it. Especially if it's their first. We want them to have the best experience, right???

**Mark Fink**, Hendricks County, Indiana (email: January 29, 2009)

I support this rule change as stated. Youths should have every opportunity that adults have.

**Jack Corpuz**, Indianapolis, Indiana (email: January 29, 2009)

Fully support this change to the youth season.

**Corpuz** again commented by email on March 27, 2009

Absolutely support the proposal to allow youth to take an antlered deer during the youth deer season.

**Earnest Needham**, Indianapolis, Indiana (email: January 30, 2009)

This would be a good idea. We are there with the youth hunter, to guide them, and we could help them to choose. We could counsel them, as to take a lesser buck, before the rut begins. This may make them less apt to get "Buck Fever" when they are faced with a mature buck later. This also would allow mature bucks to pass on their genes each year.

**Clarence H. Williams**, Warrick County, Indiana (email: January 29, 2009)

I am fully in favor of allowing our youth to take either sex deer during the youth hunt. It is about time that we treat our youth as equals in the deer hunting world. No other deer hunting group in Indiana is restricted to antlerless only. Thank you for forwarding this proposal.

**Williams** also wrote by email on January 30, 2009

On my website at [WWW.Hunt-Indiana.com](http://WWW.Hunt-Indiana.com) we were very interested in this subject. We had a lot of great discussion on it and conducted a poll. The poll was about allowing the youth to take a buck during the youth weekend. This poll can only be voted on by

members and they can only vote once. At present we have 1,735 members and 115 chose to give input. The results are as follows:

Strongly Support	80 votes (69.5%)
Support	16 votes (13.9%)
Neither	2 votes (1.7%)
Oppose	7 votes (6%)
Strongly Oppose	10 votes (8.6%)

Those in support	83.4%
Those opposed	14.6%

As you can see the results were over whelming in favor of the youth being allowed to take either sex during their youth hunt.

**Williams** again wrote by email on March 27, 2009:

I am 100% in favor of allowing the youth to take either sex deer during the youth weekend. Right now they are the only group out there that can not take an antlered deer during their hunt. That is not right.

**Donald Scott Imel**, Jefferson, Indiana (email: January 30, 2009)

I agree with the amendment that will allow a youth hunter accompanied by an adult to take any deer that walks in front of them.

**Kevin Kluemper**, Pike County, Indiana (email: January 31, 2009)

During the youth deer season I would like to see the rule changed to allow the youth hunter to harvest an antlered deer. Many I have talked to would like to see the same. If not I would like to know the reason they can't.

**David Engelking**, Nineveh, Indiana (email: January 30, 2009)

I believe that youths should have the opportunity to take either sex deer during the youth season. They should have the same opportunity during their season as all the other seasons.

**Kevin B. Ailes**, Camby, Indiana (email: January 31, 2009)

I am in full support of the changes to the youth deer season. Recruiting new youth deer hunters is the only way this sport will survive in the future.

**Loyd Roberts**, Dearborn County, Indiana (email: February 2, 2009)

I think that the youth should be able to take either a buck or doe in hunting season and the part that eliminates the buck should be changed to include these in the law.

**Steve Scudder**, Ripley County, Indiana (email: February 3, 2009)

First off, I want to say what a great thing the youth deer season has become, and want to commend everyone involved for making it possible... Thank you from me and my sons.

To the point of allowing antlered deer to be taken during the youth deer season, I am completely for allowing them the chance for an antlered deer. If the youth season was started for the purpose of getting the youth involved in the great sport of hunting, and not for management purposes, I see no reason why they should not be allowed the chance. Most youth will shoot the first deer they see if given the chance, regardless if it has antlers or not. But, when a child has their first deer step out and it has antlers and they have to watch it walk away because they aren't allowed to shoot that deer, even though he/she is deer hunting, it can be very discouraging to them. A deer is a deer to the majority of the youth that are able to make it to the woods for their first time anyway.

I hope this issue is looked at more for the sake of getting the youth involved rather than restricting them and hope that it will be passed to allow the youth to take either sex deer, antlers or no antlers.

**Carson Stailey**, Orange County, Indiana (email: February 3, 2009)

My name is Carson. I am 11 years old. When I was nine it was the second day of youth season. I had a big, big six point buck come at 15 yards. It stood at 15 yards for at least 10 minutes. Another bad thing was there were two other bucks with it. So I'm begging let kids shoot bucks in youth season! I had never shot a buck or deer with a bow! That year I had to settle for a little 4 point. I also killed a doe that night. It's time to change the law!

**Brian Juris**, Hobart, Indiana (email: February 4, 2009)

I would like to see kids be able to harvest a deer of either sex during the two day season. you don't always see a doe some times you see a buck and with 4 young boys they want to harvest a buck instead of a doe.

**Shane Deford**, Peru, Indiana (email: February 4, 2009)

This would be a great way to encourage kids to continue to hunt. Indiana has some fine bucks why not give the kids first crack at them.

**Bruce Cunningham**, Harrison County, Indiana (email: February 4, 2009)

I agree with the proposed changes to the rule that would allow an antlered deer or antlerless deer to be harvested by a youth hunter. I also agree with the proposed rule change that would change the age of a "youth" hunter to under 18 years of age. I never quite understood why the original "youth deer season" did not match the "youth hunting license" age limit. Both of these proposed changes are good for the youth of Indiana.

**William C. Herring**, Morgan County, Indiana (email: February 5, 2009)

I recommend NO change to the Youth Deer Season until other, more pressing potential changes to overall deer hunting rules are adequately examined. These potential changes include, but are not limited to issues dealing with Urban Deer Zones, bag limits and related rules for counties in which large numbers of vehicle-deer collisions occur, bag limits in counties in which DNR currently allows 4 or more Bonus Antlerless deer to be taken, and the overall structuring of deer hunting rules. Whether youth should be allowed to take an antlered deer in the Special Youth Season impacts potential changes in

philosophy and restructuring of the "bigger picture" of deer hunting rules in Indiana. For example, allowing ONLY antlerless deer to be taken BEFORE the Early Statewide Archery Season would be more consistent, more easily understood by all (including hunters, check station operators, COs, and meat processors), minimize real and potential illegal taking of antlered deer during early seasons, and more directly target antlerless deer as the most effective way to control deer numbers in specified areas and counties.

**Wade Alan Carpenter, Jr.**, Ripley County, Indiana (email: February 6, 2009)

I think allowing either sex to be taken is a great idea and I believe it would only further peak the child's interest if there is the prospect of taking that "Trophy Buck" that is so coveted by Dad!

**Greg Eley**, Grant County, Indiana (email: February 11, 2009)

In favor of allowing harvest of antlered deer during youth weekend.

**Gary Graf**, Clark County, Indiana, 4-H, Indiana Hunters Education, (email: February 19, 2009)

I am all for the proposal of allowing our youth take a antlered deer during their early gun season. If we are really trying to promote hunting to our youth, let them hunt in the early season during good weather and it should increase their chances and draw more youth to the sport.

**Rod DeRoo**, Decatur, Indiana (email: March 28, 2009)

Let youths harvest any sex of deer during the Youth Season!

**Joe Bacon**, (Indiana Deer Hunters Assoc.), Marion, Indiana (email: April 1, 2009)

Please keep the youth hunt as an antlerless season only. We need to give youth a chance to hunt in a special season, but they also have the regular season to buck hunt like all other hunters. When the season was created it was for an opportunity for an adult and youth to hunt together, the idea was to teach youth it is ok to shoot a doe. If the youth kills a buck during the early season it maybe difficult to motivate that youth to antlerless hunt later in the regular seasons. The youth could be tired from other activities, or the weather is cold. We all realize how fickle a youth can be.

As we proposed and created this rule (yes I was involved) we had a reason to make it antlerless only, we created a season structure that almost assured the youth would be out again with their mentor in the same year hunting for that "buck". Don't be fooled by those who say we did not want youth killing "our bucks". It was a very well planned hunt, involve and hook the youth on hunting, then get him/her out again in a regular season.

**Brian Ferguson**, Evansville, Indiana ((email: March 28, 2009)

Youth hunts should allow youth to harvest either a buck or doe during that weekend.

**Doug Clipp**, Columbus, IN (email: June 18, 2009)

I am 100% in favor of letting the kids take bucks during the youth season along with the other proposals. My kids have chose not to participate in the youth hunt the last couple of years for that very reason. I do not push them to be trophy hunters but society has....

**Tom Bauters**, Akron, IN (email: June 23, 2009)

The proposed youth season hunting changes are a wonderful idea. The idea of being able to sit with my 15 year old son, as he harvests either a buck or doe, is a memory that would be treasured for a lifetime. As such, please enact this proposal.

In addition, next session, please reconsider readopting the lifetime hunting/fishing license as this is a license that a parent can purchase and pass along to a son/daughter as a gift that lasts a lifetime.

**Jeff Pease**, Newburgh, IN (email: July 4, 2009)

My son and I were very excited to see that Indiana has a two day youth season before anyone else gets to go out. Then we were even more disappointed when I read the rules and saw that the kids can only shoot an antlerless deer. This is the most ridiculous rule that I have ever seen. This hunt is for the kids and I am sure that there will many first time deer hunters in the woods for these two days. I am in the belief that you become a better hunter by the time you spend in the woods and you learn something every time you're in the woods and something when you harvest a deer. I can't believe that if we see a buck I have to tell my son that he can't shoot it for his first deer. Since this is my sons first deer hunt, I want him to shoot an adult deer, doe or a buck. Of course you can imagine that if he got a buck as his first deer, he would be so happy.

The bottom line is that this season is for the kids, so don't put a crazy restriction on them where they have to pass up a buck. If we are too worried about harvesting too many bucks, make the law that if they kill a buck they can't kill another one for the balance of the season. I am in favor of Indiana hunters only having one buck tag so this doesn't need to be any different. One buck, regardless if it is in the youth season or the regular deer season.

**Jason Stone**, St. Joseph, IN (email: July 06, 2009)

I support allowing youth hunters to take bucks during the youth season.

**Mike Clabaugh**, Huntington, IN (email: July 15, 2009)

Youth hunters should be able to take a deer of either sex during the youth hunt weekend.

**Kevin Ailes**, Franklin, IN (email: July 15, 2009)

I support the proposed rule change to allow youth deer hunters the opportunity to harvest their one and only buck per deer season during the youth deer hunt. Please consider passing this rule!

**Kevin Lee Conner**, Johnson County, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I support youth hunters being able to take a deer of either sex during the youth hunt.

**Chris A Fischvogt**, Scipio, IN, IDHA (email: July 16, 2009)



Treat the youths equally. Let them kill bucks during their youth season.

**Tim Nussbaum**, Warsaw, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I am against youth taking a buck during youth season. We have already given them the opportunity to hunt deer with a gun in September.....since somehow they couldn't enjoy or get into hunting like we all did in the past when we were kids? We continue to give kids "special privs" and forget the value of simply having the privilege to hunt in the first place. Now give them "special privs" to take a buck before everyone else for fear they may not enjoy or get into hunting via traditional means???? Kids will still like and get into hunting without this "handout".....and will probably appreciate it more when they accomplish their deer hunting goal of taking a buck with the rest of us. Totally against this concept for kids clear up to age 17.....not needed!!

**Calvin Lake, Howard**, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

It is my opinion that this somewhat flies in the face of the original herd management aspect of this season and raises the pressure on the child to shoot a buck rather than just any deer. It was my understanding at the first meetings and talks about the need for a youth season that this thing was never intended for bucks to be targeted in this special season. However if this "must" happen it would be my opinion that this should count as their only and single buck of the year to follow the current OBR that is in effect here for all hunters. That said if they are going to be allowed a buck in Youth season and a second in regular season then the second buck should be reinstated for all hunters and buck bag limits and rules set to the pre OBR regs cover the buck language. This is the only fair for all hunters and reasonable action that this should follow if they are allowed 2 bucks a year. I believe that this opinion will not be popular but we are all hunters. And all the hunters I know became deer hunters without the special regs and early gun hunt. That includes my two sons who hunted deer in this state since they were very young. They are now 20 and 18. My question and concern is what has changed so drastically from when they were considered youth hunters to the imperative need to shoot a buck outside regular season. Are there too many buck deer now is this the case then reinstate the TBR now and be done with it. Or are we simply going free up dad from taking his kids in regular season a responsibility that all hunting fathers grandfathers and brothers have always had to perpetuate hunting to our youth, I think this is the real reason behind this whole thing. I gave up my hunting time to get them to the woods and set them up and set with them every year till they grew up enough to move away from them to hunt alone to get shots at their bucks/deer in regular hunting season. They did not quit or expect special treatment and neither did I or the dozens of hunters I hunt with yearly. It is my feeling that hunting fathers or mentors can and should take the children in regular season not just Youth season and this law gives self severing adult hunters a free pass to leave the kids at home when the regular season is in that way they will not be bothered by JR. Just my humble opinion leave it where it is its fine how it is.

**Rod DeRoo**, Decatur, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I see no reason to not allow youths to shoot an antlered deer. They should be able to harvest any deer that gives them a decent shot!

**Marcell Watson**, Indianapolis, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I fully support taking of either sex deer during youth hunts. One of the main purpose of this season is to attract younger hunts and allowing taking of either sex deer would greatly increase the chances of our young hunters.

**John H Ogden**, Grant, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I personally don't see a problem with letting the youth shoot a deer of either sex. It could possibly the only time they get a chance to shoot a buck there entire life. I know hunters that have hunted over 20 years and never even got a chance at a deer.

**Derrick Grant**, Greenville, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

Let the kids take a buck. Way limit them to what they can do we are trying to get them involved.

**Mark Fink**, Pittsboro, IN (email: July 16, 2009)

I support this rule change 150%! This is a great change that will help recruit more youths into hunting and hopefully that will mean less youth getting involved in drugs, gangs etc. By allowing a buck to be taken a youth hunter can now, if they are so inclined, dream of that monster buck!

**Clarence (Woody) Williams**, Warrick, IN, [WWW.Hunt-Indiana.com](http://WWW.Hunt-Indiana.com) (email: July 16, 2009)

YES, ABSOLUTELY YES. I am a firm believer that ALL hunters should be treated equally. No other deer hunter group is restricted to what gender of deer that they can shoot. Why should the youth be penalized just because they are youths? I do believe that if a youth shoots an antlered deer in the youth season it should count against their yearly buck limit. If it is a one-buck limit what difference does it make if the youth kills it in the youth weekend or a week later in bow season or a month later in the firearm season? I have heard all the excuses, but no really valid reasons, for not allowing the youth to take either sex during the youth deer weekend. In my opinion, none holds water.

1) Some say that dad will shoot the buck for the youth. The people that believe that must know different dads than I do. I do not know of any dad that would grab the gun out of the hands of his mentored youth to shoot a buck, no matter what size the buck is. If that happened it would be an enforcement issue. Basically all youth are being kept from hunting either sex on what an extremely small minority just "might do". Regulations should not be made on what someone "might do".

2) Others say we should teach the youths "deer management" by insisting that they shoot does only. According to the Quality Deer Management Association "deer management" is not limited to just killing antlerless deer, but also includes taking of some bucks. Teach the youth to deer hunt first. There is always time to teach them what the mentor "thinks" is proper deer management.

3) Some says that some farmers will not open their land to the youth if they have the opportunity to shoot either sex. The IDNR allowing the youths to take a deer of either sex

does not supersede what the farmer allows to take on his/her farm. The farmer can say “NoBucks” and the youth and their mentor can accept that or find another farm to hunt. Most farmers are dads and moms too and I do believe that they will allow a youth to take the first deer that comes along buck or doe.

115 members of [www.hunt-indiana.com](http://www.hunt-indiana.com) participated in a poll on this subject. 96 or 83.4% of the members who participated were in favor of allowing the youth to take either sex deer during the youth hunt weekend. Only members can vote in the poll and they can only vote once.

Strongly Support (80 votes, 69.5%)  
Support (16 votes, 13.9%)  
Neither (2 votes, 1.7%)  
Oppose (7 votes, 6%)  
Strongly Oppose (10 votes, 8.6%)

A similar poll on another Indiana hunting website garnered very similar results, albeit not as many members voted. 40 members gave their input and 25 of the members (62.5%) said that youths should be able to take either sex deer. 15 members (37.5%) said no. Please consider allowing our youth to hunt the same gender of deer that we can hunt..

**Tom Conely**, Meade, KY, Grandview Hunting Clubs, LLC (email: July 16, 2009)  
Absolutely, give the youth a chance at either sex. Deer are born very near a 50/50 male/female sex ratio, so they should be harvested at that same rate. If youth are allowed to hunt deer, they should be allowed to harvest either sex. It's good sound quality deer management to do so and also good for keeping youth hunters interested in the sport of hunting.

**Chad A. Zartman**, Warsaw, IN (email: July 16, 2009)  
Oppose. Youth hunters are excited to shoot any deer, even does. This change would counter act what the state has been trying to accomplish, which is to have more mature bucks in the herd. I do not think this would generate more license sales.

**Brandi Jordan**, Auburn, IN (email: July 16, 2009)  
Please allow youth to take a buck during the youth season. This will help with youth recruitment.

**Bob Houseworth Jr.**, Morgan, IN (email: July 17, 2009)  
IMHO youth hunters do not need all of the special rules. They might as well learn early on what the future of serious deer hunting as an adult has in store for them. It's not an easy outdoor sport but the positive & negative learning experiences are a great education that will provide memories for a lifetime. Successful "tough" hunts usually mean the most to a true deer hunter.

**Jason Stone, Granger**, IN (email: July 17, 2009)  
Youths should be able to harvest any deer they see.

**Torry Miller**, Decatur, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

I strongly feel that it is necessary to allow a youth to take any deer (antlered or antlerless) if they would like to. Its important to introduce younger hunters to the sport, but not very fair to not allow them to shoot a buck, when its legal to shoot a buck only one week after the youth season.

**BJ Schewin**, Bartholomew, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

I support the proposed rule regarding youth deer season and being able to take either sex.

**Donald Scott Imel**, Jefferson, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

I am all for the youth being able to harvest either sex of deer during the youth season. My daughter wants to go, but just doesn't think that she could shoot a mommy deer.

**Issaac Elijah Brown**, Jennings, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

Please adopt amendment to allow a youth to harvest either sex during the youth deer season. Thru numerous conversations with other sportsmen across the state, most of us can not locate a viable reason not to.

**Richard Wayne Mittendorf**, Anderson, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

Please allow the taking of a buck or doe during the youth season.

**John Kevin Haendiges**, Ramsey, IN (email: July 17, 2009)

I firmly support youth being allowed to take either sex of deer during special youth season.

**Josh Beck**, Hendricks County, IN (email: July 18, 2009)

I fully support youth being able to take a deer of either sex, antlered or antlerless, during the special early youth season.

**Carla Sumney Nussbaum**, Warsaw, IN (email: July 20, 2009)

I vote AGAINST the Youth Hunters being able to take a buck with a gun during the Youth Season. How will this buck mean more to them if not shot with family in the regular season firearms? I don't get it. I agree that it's neat to see kids having a good time.....but what is hard to understand is how handing kids "high perceived value items "ie a buck, in an easier/special fashion will help them have a better time and understand the true value in what is just handed to them. There still is a VALUE OF PATIENCE that we need not let them forget.....and we still need to remind them that they can already take a doe during their special season.....and have 3 months to take a buck.

**Scotty R. Hollan**, Scott County, IN (email: July 20, 2009)

The ability to take an antlered deer during the youth season would give young hunters greater expectations on their hunt. I have an eleven year old son who seems to be content with the antlerless only rule, but the opportunity to take an antlered deer during the youth hunt would inspire him to get into the field more.

**John Schoonveld**, Indianapolis, IN (email: July 20, 2009)

Great rule change. Any way to increase the chances for the youth to have a successful hunt is good by me. With hunter numbers decreasing, anything we can do to attract and keep youth hunters is good. Only complainers I see are the bow hunters who selfishly want first crack at all bucks. Have two youth hunters and soon a third. Success two years ago, then last year all we saw was a buck. It was fun to watch him, but would have been better to harvest him. Please adopt the change.

**Brian Allison**, Anderson, IN (email: July 20, 2009)

I highly in favor of the proposed rule changes regarding youth hunting. I applaud the DNR for its continual actions to broaden and make youth hunting easier and accessible in Indiana.

**Gary Wayne Myers**, Angola, IN (email: July 21, 2009)

If a person qualifies for the purchase and use of a "Resident Youth Consolidated Hunting License", why are they to be penalized for their birth date being before the scheduled Special Youth Hunt Dates. As Long as they qualify for the Resident Youth Consolidated Hunting license, they should be allowed to take part in the Special Youth Hunt and eliminate confusion over the different rulings as to who is considered a Youth Hunter. Keep things simple as to who is a Youth.

**Brad A. Davis**, Angola IN (email: July 21, 2009)

I would just like to chime in and be on the record for the youth. It makes no sense to me to educate our youth on our passion for wildlife, give them a special weekend before any other hunter can go a field. we even have agreed upon the 1 buck rule statewide, but for some reason restrict the next generation of hunters on their special day to does only when in most cases just a few days later if not at times 1-2 days I as an archer can go a field and legally take that buck that a young hunter had to pass and possibly have to wait till firearm season. I ask who are we trying to educate and inspirer for tomorrow's conservation? Let the smiles go wild.

**Jay A. Kerkhoff**, Velpen, IN (email: July 21, 2009)

I don't believe youth should be allowed to take a buck early. (Too many adults will poach).

**William D Newman**, Columbus, IN (email: July 21, 2009)

I have three children that enjoy hunting. The more opportunities I can put in front of them to take a deer is good. Thank You for the youth season. If you allowed a buck to be taken it would elevate the excitement level and draw more interest. One reason: There would be the possibility of more shot opportunity with a buck/doe option. Two: Children should not be excluded from taking a trophy along with meat for the freezer. Teach them some times you get a little bonus along with the meat. Last thing: As a parent I would like to see that my children all receive an opportunity at a buck sometime during the season. Last year proved to be difficult. Only one of the three even had an opportunity. More

opportunity can only be better. I promise we will still shoot the does. That is not the issue it is having the opportunity. Don't leave bucks out it cuts the chance in half.

**Sam Whitaker**, Kosciusko County, IN (email: July 21, 2009)

I oppose allowing a special youth season for children under eighteen (18) years of age to harvest bucks. I authored plenty of letters to the legislatures concerning the proposed bill 1582. As you know in the bill it would mandate DNR to issue a certain number of antlerless permits. DNR has responded by making Kosciusko County a 8 bag limit on antlerless deer. I have heard DNR officials comment that they do not know how much good the 8 permits will do since hunters will only kill so many deer. Why then would we want to allow our youth to harvest bucks when we really want to harvest the antlerless deer? Seems like we need programs to push for the harvest of antlerless deer not the other way. I have also participated and supported the one buck rule. As a result of that we have a better age class of buck in our deer herd. I see hunters that had quit hunting back into hunting. Hunters can now actually have a chance at harvesting a mature deer and not a one and one half year old deer. The reason for the youth program to begin with is to get the youth involved in hunting since that has been declining. I believe the antlered season may sound good at first to the youth and to DNR but when we slide back to where we were 8 years ago (before the one buck rule) the youth will soon lose interest. Regardless of what DNR may think every hunters wants to see or harvest a mature buck. Since the one buck rule I have seen hunters more excited about hunting then I ever have. They are seeing big mature bucks in the fields in the summer they are getting trail camera pictures of these deer. Hunters are excited. This new excitement is bringing revenue to the state. Let's protect the antlered deer and promote the harvest of antlerless deer.

**Jaxon H. Davis**, Angola, IN (email: July 22, 2009)

Dear DNR I am a 9 year old 4th grader planning to hunt this year during the youth deer hunt season. I think you should be able to shoot a buck during the youth hunt. A reason why I think kids could shoot a buck is because in the next week your parents can go out and shoot that same buck that you couldn't get . I think the kids would be more excited about hunting. I think that if my dad came home with my trophy I'd be mad. Another option is to let the land owner decide whether or not to let you shoot a buck or not.

**Robert M Rudisill**, Warrick, IN (email: July 22, 2009)

The rule that allows a youth hunter in youth season to harvest a buck is a very good change. Why should our future hunters be limited to only taking antlerless deer on possibly their first hunt? Keep their interest level high with the opportunity to harvest a nice buck or any buck.

**Andrew John Helwig**, Bartholomew County, IN, Christian Bowhunters of America (email: July 22, 2009)

I believe that youth should have the opportunity to take a deer of either sex. Youth early hunt presents an opportunity to introduce kids to the outdoors and to limit it in any way is injustice to the kids.

**Gregory Donald Eley**, Marion, IN (email: July 22, 2009)

I am favor of allowing youth to take either antlered or antlerless during youth weekend because it encourages youth participation in the sport. Encouraging youth participation in hunting and fishing should continue to be a top priority for IDNR and all other hunting organizations.

**Wes Rainey**, Bedford, IN (email: July 22, 2009)

I know there will be many arguments about the youth being allowed to take a buck during the special youth season, but I think it will encourage every young hunter to want to continue hunting in the future if they are allowed and successful during their first hunts. I think it would be a good thing to make this change. I believe that the youth should be allowed to hunt during the youth season until age 18, this allows them to get full use of their youth license.

**Gery A. Meyer**, Dekalb County, IN (email: July 22, 2009)

The youth season limit of one antlerless deer during the youth season should stay as is, bucks should not be allowed to be hunted during the youth season. The age limit should stay at 16. The youth gun season has all but ruined early bow season in the area I hunt, leave the limit and age as is.

**Gary Lucas**, Brown, IN (email: July 23, 2009)

I do believe that with all that the non-hunting world has to offer our kids that we as hunters should do all we can to teach are children to hunt and fish, I believe a deer herd is strong enough to support a buck or doe kill for a kid, it would not hurt us. I know as a young hunter it would have been hard to understand why I can't shoot the buck standing in front of me, I say let's get are kids hooked on hunting and we won't have to hunt our kids. I also believe we should give them a week hunt, not just the weekend.

**Kevin Van Arsdale**, Plainfield, IN (email: July 23, 2009)

Proud Parent of a Indiana Youth Deer Hunter/Pass the Heritage Down

Comments: My son and I have had the pleasure of participating in the Indiana Youth Deer Hunts the past 3 years-"And thank you all for giving my son and I that special opportunity". With many life long memories of those hunts and each a successful hunt to us. I believe that my son and all the other youths that participate each year on these special 2-day hunts should have the privilege of taking a deer, buck or doe during this 2-day youth season. If they are so inclined to take a legal buck during this special youth hunt period, it should then count as their one buck for the regular season that year. I don't think this rule change would hurt anything or any one, except for the greedy self absorbed buck hunting adults--that don't want the buck they have picked for themselves that year to get taken by a youth hunter. My son and I have participated on these special youth hunts the past 3 years and he has taken a doe each year, but he would like the opportunity to take a buck if it presented itself and was the deer he wanted to shoot. We as a family hunt deer for the meat and family time together primarily, not just for the antlers, but he would like to shoot a buck if it was legal and it was a deer he wanted to take.

**Matthew S. Barton**, Wabash, IN (email: July 24, 2009)

As an avid deer hunter I spend countless hours on stand trying to kill a nice buck. I was ok with the youth taking does in September, but I am against them being able to take a buck in September. The bucks are finally beginning to show some size and even though they would not be able to kill another buck, should they take one in the youth season, bucks are very relaxed in September and many of them would get killed. When I was a kid, I had to hunt the regular seasons, just like everybody else. Killing a big buck in September, especially with a rifle, is no accomplishment. We got a good thing going with these deer; please don't allow more of them to be killed unnecessarily.

**Dustin Waters**, Starke County, IN (email: July 24, 2009)

I am all for youth hunters gaining access to the outdoors. I enjoy seeing young hunters succeed, but under the current gun season dates, I don't feel that bucks need to be targeted during the early season. During our current firearms season, bucks are at their most vulnerable state, as they are in full rut and looking for does during day light hours. Our bucks endure a pretty tough toll during that rut with the number of guns in the woods during that season. I don't feel it to be a sound idea to go after them any earlier than that, regardless if it were youth hunters or adults in an early muzzleloader season. Until our season structure changes there is no need to be shooting bucks early in the year, due to the ease it takes to kill a buck during our firearms season structured currently.

**Jeff Clark**, Hamilton, IN (email: July 24, 2009)

I think the best thing the state has done is to put a youth season in place. It will be a huge help for hunter recruitment, and has given me the opportunity to spend some dedicated time teaching my children how to be a responsible sportsman in the field. Unfortunately the temptation of a big buck standing in front of a guided youth could quickly make a positive situation negative. The temptation of the adult to shoot the buck may prove to be too much, placing the child in a position to be forced to lie to cover for the actions of their guide. The rule should remain doe only to make sure this situation will not occur. A child will always have the opportunity to shoot a buck during the normal season.

**Russell D McCoy**, La Porte, IN (email: July 25, 2009)

Between my son, son-in-law & myself, we have been taking & will continue to take 4 boys ages 10 to 13, on the youth deer hunt. I think it's a great way to get youngsters involve in the sport & allowing them to use the "handgun cartridge" rifles also gives them the opportunity them to be more accurate without fearing the recoil of a shotgun slug, at least until their old enough to handle it. I also see no reason to keep them from harvesting a buck in the youth hunt as long as the "one buck" rule applies.

**Ben Wagner**, Jackson, IN (email: July 25, 2009)

I support this amendment. Let me give my buck to a kid as well. Ha Ha. It's all about them and they are our future. Indiana supports the youth very well and I'm very proud of that.

**Michael Todd Anderson**, Shelbyville, IN (email: July 27, 2009)

I fully support allowing youths the opportunity to harvest a deer of either sex in the youth season. I also believe that if a buck is killed by a youth in the youth season, that should



count as their antlered deer for the year. As a father who has seen a disappointed kid that couldn't shoot a buck in the youth season, I fully support this proposal.

**Steve Scudder**, Ripley County, IN (email: July 27, 2009)

The YOUTH DEER SEASON is a season created to get youth involved. I've heard the comments that it is a "management tool" for the state to down size the antlerless population. If this is the case, then the title should be changed to YOUTH MANAGEMENT HUNT. I was under the assumption though that this was not the case at all. With that said, why are we limiting what the youth can harvest to an antlerless only deer??? They should be able to shoot a DEER. A deer is a deer regardless if it has antlers or not. Most of the youth, including my son, would shoot the first available deer they had a chance to harvest regardless of what it had on it's head or didn't have on it's head. In my opinion, opening the harvest limits to either sex will increase the involvement of the youth in the sport of deer hunting. I've seen it first hand, the disappointing face of a kid that had a buck in range and couldn't shoot it, only to watch it walk off and then look up and ask "Why can't I shoot a buck??" To him I replied, "I don't really know why". Please consider opening the youth deer season to allow them to harvest either sex.

**James Edward Sprinkle**, English, IN (email: July 29, 2009)

I would like to comment on the youth being able to take a antlered or antlerless deer during the youth season. I am in favor of them killing either sex for many reasons. The first reason is during the youth season the weather is favorable for a young hunter to be out there without being miserably cold. It is not always this way once the regular firearm season opens. The second reason is that they are just allowed one buck, what makes the difference when they harvest it. The most important reason is that they are our future. We need to do everything we can to make them want to be out there. Nothing is going to get them hooked on hunting more than being able to harvest a buck no matter what season they are hunting in. Last year was the first year my daughter hunted. She was 7. She didn't understand the rule and neither did I. The first morning we were out there a nice 10 pt walked out of course I had explained to her that she couldn't take a buck. This didn't seem like a big deal to her until it was time and there was a buck and she couldn't harvest him. She was trying to be tough for a 7 year old but the tears rolling down her cheeks was telling her true feelings. To me anyone who is against a child being able to harvest either sex during the youth hunt, cannot consider their selves a sportsman. They have to be a selfish hunter who doesn't care about anyone but their selves. It is not going to hurt our deer herd if this rule passes and it is only going to make the kids want to hunt more. Please consider my comments from the heart. This is the most important issue in the future of our hunters.

**Mike Winks**, Jackson, IN (email: July 30, 2009)

I think it is a bad idea. You will have kids being taught to trophy hunt at an early age. I also believe that a lot of Dads will be waking up their kids to go check in the big buck that they shot for them that morning. The youth season should be an opportunity to harvest does. The state offers several options to take countless antlerless deer. That tells me that people aren't taking enough antlerless deer. Letting the youth take antlered or antlerless will only compound the problem! I also think that the youth season should be

for kids 15 and under. They should also have to be accompanied by an adult. This would give people to the opportunity to teach safety and ethics to younger hunters. That is what a "Youth" season should be about. Youth that can drive are just getting added hunting opportunities. If the state wants to be uniform, anyone of driving age should have to have a fishing license and buy regular hunting licenses. This would also help generate extra revenue for the state.

**Chad Kevin Steckler, Evansville, IN** (email: August 2, 2009)

I am very supportive of allowing youth to take an antlered deer during the youth season. The season is designed to get our youth interested in the outdoors and forcing them to pass on what should be a totally legal animal is a detriment to the program as it can leave to child frustrated and uninterested in pursuing the sport further. My daughter had to pass on a very nice 3 1/2 year old buck the first youth season, thankfully it didn't dampen her enthusiasm, however she has yet to encounter a similar deer during season yet. I also support the one buck rule so if the youth gets a buck than that is their buck for the entire season.

**Clark Alan Pritchard, Jeffersonville, IN** (email: August 3, 2009)

I think the youth is our future. Let them take a buck or a doe in the youth hunt and maybe they will be hooked on deer hunting. We as adult need to encourage the youth to go to the woods and hunt.

**Gary Graf, Clark County, IN** (email: August 4, 2009)

I would like the rule to be changed to allow the youth to take a buck in the early youth season. It would be a great way to recruit youth to the sport and offer them a chance to take deer less pressured and during milder weather.

**Dean Weimer, Garrett, IN** (email: August 4, 2009)

I feel that the youth "antlerless only" season should be kept as it is. I think that any youth should be taught the importance of harvesting antlerless deer in the modern era. When I was a youngster I didn't have any clue about deer management. I was happy to harvest any deer when I was a kid. I think from an educational standpoint the rule is just fine like it is. After all any youth hunter would have the same 3 month long season as everyone else to fill their buck tags. I believe that if some youngsters shot a buck in the youth season, many of them would not go back out to try and kill any antlerless deer. Not all of the youth hunters would quit, but many of them would. Some argue that this "antlerless only" season is taking away an "opportunity", but ALL hunters have plenty of opportunity to fill tags all season long. I personally like the youth season the way it is. Young hunters can then hunt the remainder of the season for a buck.

**Todd Adrian Wininger, Fort Wayne, IN** (email: August 8, 2009)

Taking of a buck should definitely be allowed during the youth-hunts, particularly if the youth is still limited to that one buck.

**Abigail Frost, Fort Wayne, IN, Save Maumee Grassroots Org.** (email: August 8, 2009)

This is a comment about youth taking antlered deer. I believe my son, who is 13 years old, and has learned to hunt with my father since he was 5, should be able to hunt before the actual season and take antlered deer. It gives him a chance to get to the deer before they "wise up" to all of the other hunters trying to find them.

**Brooks W. Langeloh, Whitley, IN** (email: August 7, 2009)

I FULLY SUPPORT this change to allow youth to take an antlered deer during youth season. I believe that the goal of youth seasons is to encourage kids to hunt. Their best chance of getting a buck is in youth season. The weather is more favorable for the young kids, we all know that they get cold fast, can't sit still and can't sit very long without getting bored. I think this is a great idea and a good way to promote the hunting heritage. If you are going to allow pre-season deprivation tag holders to shoot bucks I see no reason why youth hunters should not be able to.

**Mark Schaefer, Whitley, IN** (email: August 7, 2009)

OK with either sex deer during the special youth hunt. May not take an additional antlered deer the remaining of the regular season though.

**William LaVigne, Fort Wayne, IN** (email: August 7, 2009)

I am a deer hunter and I see no reason not to allow the taking of either sex deer during this youth season. The entire purpose behind having a "youth" season of any kind is to recruit "new blood" into the sport. What better way than this.

**Bradley Frost, Fort Wayne, IN** (email: August 7, 2009)

Please allow youth hunters to take either sex during the early youth deer hunt. If a young person is able to harvest a nice antlered deer, they will be deer hunters for life and will encourage others to hunt. The only opposition to this proposed rule is selfish adult bow hunters who fear some "young kid" will harvest "their trophy". I have taken m grandson hunting during the early season and all we have seen is antlered deer. During the regular season, my grandson is not seeing antlered deer. I feel it is more difficult for young, inexperienced hunters to harvest antlered deer. Let's give the young people a chance for a antlered trophy. The bow hunters will still get their trophies.

**Thomas Johnson, LaGrange, IN** (August 7, 2009)

I think it is a good idea to let the kids take a buck during the youth season.

**Bill Norton, Grant, IN, Walnut Creek Archery, Inc.** (email: August 7, 2009)

As a hunter safety instructor, retired law enforcement officer and owner of Walnut Creek Archery, a deer check-in station, I am in favor of allowing youth in the early youth season to take a buck or doe with any of the same weapons that I am allowed to hunt with.

**Jason Pearson, Borden, IN** (email: August 8, 2009)

Youth hunters should be able to take a buck or a doe.

**Brad Snyder, Liberty, IN** (email: August 8, 2009)

Please allow the youth to shoot Buck in the Youth season. This makes no sense as to why they can't the. If it is to stop the "fathers" or adults that are hunting with a youth from poaching this is not right. Some set on poaching and one that would do it with a youth is going to poach no matter what...Let the youth shoot a buck this is what gets the hunting juices following "the thought of old mossy Horns" walking by them and they getting a chance to shoot him. Thank you for thinking about this and please vote the right way for the future of your DNR to keep hunters and adding new ones. Vote Yes

**Jeff Eley, Allen, IN** (email: August 10, 2009)

Please pass this amendment. Allowing youth to hunt but not take trophy specimens is a travesty. Getting them started early is the best way to keep them interested in something besides video games and MTV!

**Kelly Booher, Whitley County, IN** (email: August 10, 2009)

I think this is one of the best proposals in recent years. Allowing our youth to take an antlered deer during the youth season is a great way to be able to pass the heritage of hunting to them.

**James Foreman, Fort Wayne, IN** (email: August 11, 2009)

Not in agreement with changing any sex rule during youth hunting season.

**Darrel Groves, Allen, IN** (email: August 11, 2009)

I think it would be a great idea to expand the youth hunt and allow them to shoot a buck. What better way to get a new generation excited about the sport? I took my son out 2 years ago and we had to pass on 2 bucks before a doe passed by us. By then the 2 bucks had spooked the doe and he missed his chance for his first deer. I support the amendment to expand the youth hunt.

**George E Hoger III, Allen, IN** (email: August 11, 2009)

I support youth being able to harvest a buck during the youth season. If they do harvest a buck during the youth season, they can not take another during the rest of the season, "One buck per year".

**David Wade Brodbeck, Huntington, IN** (email: August 11, 2009)

i think we need to do all we can to keep the children's interest in hunting. So I would like to see were the children could shoot either sex during the youth season. I'm all for it

**Bradley K. Jenshak, Monroe, IN** (email: August 11, 2009)

I strongly support the taking of either an antlered or antlerless deer during the youth hunt. Each residence is allowed to take one antlered deer per year and they should be allowed to harvest the buck during any seasons. Last year my son and I hunted the youth weekend and saw three deer; an 8 pt, 4 pt and a spike all which were illegal game. Although an extremely rewarding time in the field, he was disappointed that he did not have the opportunity to take one of the bucks. Our two later gun hunts together ended up without seeing any deer in range of our weapons. I also believe that the youth hunt

allows a parent/guardian to take a youth in the field during a much safer period due to a significant lesser number of hunters crowding the areas. I am a government civilian and work at Crane which provides for our only hunting opportunities.

**Erik Allen Herrberg, Huntington, IN** (email: August 12, 2009)

I have an 11 year old son that loves to deer hunt. He has completed the Hunters Education course. For the past two years, he has had a chance to take a buck during the youth season in September. He has been unsuccessful so far to bag a doe. I believe that if this season was intended for our children to have a better chance to succeed in bagging a deer before regular season opens, and then they should be allowed to take either a buck or doe.

**Joseph Murphy, Whitley, IN** (email: August 12, 2009)

I feel that we should not deprive our young hunters the opportunity to harvest their first buck possibly a trophy during the youth hunting season.

**Harry W. Francies II, Fort Wayne, IN** (email: August 12, 2009)

I believe the rules should stay as is. Youths have of time during the regular seasons. This is a opportunity to assist in keeping the doe population in control.

**Darrel R Walter, Steuben, IN** (email: August 12, 2009)

Anterless only during youth hunt.

**Bryan Nugent, North Webster, IN** (email: August 13, 2009)

Yes – Kids should have the right to shoot a buck! On the youth waterfowl does it say they can't shoot drakes-"No".

**Clay Webb, White, IN, Conservation Officer** (email: August 13, 2009)

I strongly support the change to allow youths to take antlered deer during the youth season. I am an avid deer hunter and would like to take a trophy deer every season. Unlike some hunters I do not believe my "buck fever" should get in the way of common sense. I do not believe that allowing youths to take antlered deer for 2 days is going to adversely affect my chances at taking a trophy deer and if it does then I guess that is too bad. It is far more important that we introduce young people to hunting and the outdoors and give them the best chance to be successful. By doing so we are developing new hunters which we badly need.

**James Meyer, Noble County, IN** (email: August 13, 2009)

This is a bad idea. The deer are already spooked enough without adding to the problem.

**Brian Traylor, Crawford, IN** (email: August 13, 2009)

**Organization: Crawford County School Corporation**

Comments: Please go forward with these proposed rule changes. We need to continue to work on increasing the success of our youth hunters. This will go a long way to insure that we have a strong future population of Indiana hunters and all hunters will benefit.

**Brett A. Beard, Warrick, IN** (email: August 14, 2009)

Excellent changes, the only way to keep our sport alive is to continue making it more exciting for our youth.

**Nolan Sausaman, North Webster, IN** (email: August 14, 2009)

I strongly believe that the youth should be able to harvest a buck during the youth season. If they do indeed harvest a buck during this time period that is still there one for buck for the year, and they would be done buck hunting. It makes no sense to allow bucks to be taken during the depredation hunting period but the youth can't have a two day chance at one. I have a 12 year old daughter that loves to hunt and is fine with taking a doe during the youth season, but having a chance at a buck I feel would increase youth hunting and that is what we need for the future of the sport.

**Chad Tom, Leesburg, IN** (email: August 14, 2009)

My opinion on this subject is that the kids of our future should be able to harvest a buck of their choice and that will be their buck for that current year. the one buck rule is working great but I think whoever is in charge down in Bloomington needs to get their head out of you know where and get things straight. I saw just last night 8/13/09 a perfect 12pt and a small six pt that a man harvested on a deer reduction tag north of Milford IN. To me and a lot of other people these tags are stupid. I did the deer reduction a few years ago and set it up for all does. Our county can now shoot 8 bonus does. We have to pay for every tag for those deer we shoot. Those people can shoot bucks or does for nothing. Some people I know have got as many as 30 tags to shoot either sex. To me that is just stupid. What the hell do we have a one buck rule for then? The deer reduction tags should be for does only and lower our county Bonus antlerless tags. It only makes sense to most people. If these guys can shoot bucks whatever the size maybe, then the kids should be able to shoot them also. Please get it right for our kids.

**Jeff Anglemeyer, North Webster, IN** (email: August 14, 2009)

I believe that Ind. should let the youth have the right to choose to either take an antlerless or an antlered deer I have a 11 year old son that is refusing to hunt the youth season because of this issue he would like the option and the right to choose. If the state would like the youth to get interested and stay interested in the out of doors then lets help keep their interest not restrict them. I have 2 sons and the oldest has always been interested in the out of doors I am also trying to share this quality time with my youngest son. So let's help the youth stay interested in nature.

**Stuart Grell, Fountain County, IN** (email: August 14, 2009)

I want to see the rule change to make it possible for a youth hunter to shoot either antlered or unantlered deer.

**Mike McCartin, Allen, IN** (email: August 15, 2009)

Youth deer season should be abolished - they lack the necessary judgment to be safe in the woods.

**Brad Rozzi, Logansport, IN, Freedom Hunt** (email: August 15, 2009)

I am certainly in favor of allowing youth to take either sex during the youth season as long as the one buck rule applies. I cannot understand why we would choose to designate a specific weekend for young hunters, but not allow them to hunt under the same rules and conditions as adults. If our goal is to encourage young hunters to become active in outdoor activities, we should afford them the opportunity to experience the ultimate thrill of bagging a mature whitetail.

**Glen Sprinkle, English, IN** (U.S. Mail: August 6, 2009)

This written comment is included as Exhibit B.

**c) Response by the Department of Natural Resources**

The Department of Natural Resources offered the following response to the public comments.

**Special Youth Season DNR Response**

Currently, the youth deer season allows a youth hunter under the age of 18 to take only one antlerless deer during this special season which lasts for only two (2) days prior to the start of the early archery season. The DNR received a petition in 2008 with over 100 signatures of Indiana residents requesting this rule change. Additionally, the DNR conducted an on-line survey asking deer license buyers their opinion on this issue, and 80% supported this rule change. The DNR has been working to recruit new hunters, and this special season provides an opportunity for youth hunters to hunt for only two (2) days without the large number of hunters being present in the field during the regular deer firearms season. While this special youth season was originally implemented as a deer management tool to give youth hunters a special opportunity to take additional antlerless deer, the DNR believes that it is important that the youth hunter be able to take whichever deer he/she has an opportunity to take first, regardless of whether it is an antlered or antlerless deer. The DNR believes that youth hunters should not have to pass up an antlered deer if that is the first deer that he/she sees within range. Many fathers have complained about their son or daughter only being able to kill an antlerless deer when the first or only deer the youth hunter had within range was an antlered deer (buck). The intent of the DNR is to give youth hunters, especially new ones, an opportunity to hunt under the supervision of an adult and have a special opportunity to take a deer without having to deal with thousands of other hunters in the field during the deer firearms season.

If the youth hunter takes an antlered deer, he/she would not be able to take another antlered deer during the rest of the archery, firearms, or muzzleloader seasons combined, in accordance with the "one buck rule." Youth are not being given the ability to take any more antlered deer than anyone else; they simply are being given an opportunity to hunt deer prior to the deer archery and firearms seasons.

Some individuals have commented on the fact that this may give the adult who takes the youth out hunting an opportunity to illegally harvest a buck prior to the regular deer hunting seasons. The DNR does not believe that this should be the reason for not

allowing a youth hunter to take a buck. The majority of deer hunters hunt deer legally; there are always some who will take a deer illegally, regardless of what the rules are, and DNR conservation officers can take appropriate action when violations are committed.

Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio all have special youth deer hunting seasons that allow the youth hunter to take a deer of either sex prior to the start of the regular deer firearms season.

There is no requirement that the adult who accompanies the youth hunter take the youth hunter hunting again later that year. Furthermore, the youth hunter may only have this one weekend to go deer hunting due to other commitments with school and family, or for financial reasons, and should not be limited to only antlerless deer during these two (2) days.

Regarding the issue of taking additional antlerless deer, staff from the DNR are reviewing our current deer management strategies and are looking for ways to provide additional opportunities for hunters, not just youth hunters, to take antlerless deer. The DNR believes that the special youth season should be viewed as a hunter recruitment/retention tool as opposed to a management tool to take more antlerless deer. Furthermore, the Natural Resources Advisory Council is reviewing comments from the public regarding the addition of a special antlerless-only deer season and will be providing a recommendation to the Natural Resources Commission on this matter in January of 2010.

#### Age of youth hunter

The age of youth hunters that can participate in the youth deer hunting season is being increased in a separate rule package (LSA #09-44) to those under the age of 18, instead of 16, in order to be consistent with state statute in IC 14-22-12-1. The resident youth consolidated hunting license and the nonresident youth hunting licenses authorized in IC 14-22-12-1 are available for youth under the age of 18 at the time the youth purchases the license. Furthermore, youth hunters under the age of 18 can also participate in the free youth hunting days authorized in IC 14-22-11-18, and youth under the age of 18 are also now exempt from needing a fishing license to fish in public waters per IC 14-22-11-8.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed rule amendments would change 312 IAC 9-3-4(b) to allow a youth hunting during the special youth deer season to take a deer of either sex. The special youth deer season takes place on two (2) consecutive days beginning on the Saturday immediately before October 1, which marks the first day of the early archery season.

The overwhelming majority of the individuals offering comments with respect to this rule proposal favor the adoption of this amended rule.



Certain comments express the opinion that a youth who takes an antlered deer during the special youth deer season should not be allowed to take a second buck during any other deer season because to do otherwise would be inconsistent with existing administrative rules that allow only one buck to be taken by an individual hunter across all seasons annually. *See 312 IAC 9-3-2(d), "One Buck Rule"*<sup>1</sup>. Other comments offer the opinion that the ability of a youth to take antlered deer is counter to the Department's effort to increase the number of mature antlered deer. The rule as proposed is consistent with the *One Buck Rule* in that it expressly prohibits a youth who takes an antlered deer during the special youth deer season from taking another antlered deer during the later archery, firearms or muzzleloader seasons.

Certain comments offered in opposition to the proposed rule express the opinion that the original establishment of the youth deer season was for the purpose of population control. These individuals believe that the youth season should remain antlerless only. The Department's response observes that the special youth season was established as a recruitment tool but acknowledges that it was also viewed as a means of managing the deer herds by allowing youths to only take antlerless deer. The Department now observes "that it is important that the youth hunter be able to take whichever deer he/she has an opportunity to take first, regardless of whether it is an antlered or antlerless deer."

The comment of Jack Corpuz at the public hearing reflects that the idea for a youth deer season was one of several proposals offered in 2005 by a group of sportsmen interested in recruiting youths to the hunting sports. Mr. Corpuz stated that the focus of the original proposals were recruitment of young hunters, not herd management, and noted that the proposal made to the Department did not specify that only an antlerless deer could be taken during the youth season.

Those individuals who support the adoption of the proposed rule focus on the benefits to be derived from getting youths involved in the hunting sports. They reflect upon the

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<sup>1</sup> This rule is presently subject to a pending non-substantive rule amendment in the Deer Hunting and Hunter Education Housekeeping Rule, Administrative Cause 08-189D, LSA #09-44. Through that rule adoption 312 IAC 9-3-2(d) will become 312 IAC 9-3-2(r)

opportunity this special season provides for youths to learn about hunting and get exciting about the hunting sports. However, they also observe the disappointment the youths' experience when an antlered deer is within range but cannot be taken. Certain of the comments reflect that a youth hunter has had the opportunity during the youth season to take an antlered deer but never had the opportunity to take an antlerless deer. Compounding the situation, in the mind of individuals offering comments, is the difficulty in attempting to explain to a youth why they are prohibited from taking an antlered deer.

The hearing officer observes, as does the Department, that for the youth deer season to truly serve as a recruitment tool a youth needs to be able to take the first deer within range.

The hearing officer recommends that the proposed rule be granted final adoption.

Dated: August 19, 2009

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Sandra L. Jensen  
Hearing Officer

## “Exhibit A”

### TITLE 312 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

#### Final Rule

LSA Document #09-60(F)

#### DIGEST

Amends 312 IAC 9-3-4 to allow a youth hunter to take either an antlered or antlerless deer during the special youth deer season. Effective 30 days after filing with the Publisher.

#### **312 IAC 9-3-4**

SECTION 1. 312 IAC 9-3-4, PROPOSED TO BE AMENDED AT 20090722-IR-312090044PRA, SECTION 3, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

#### **312 IAC 9-3-4** Season dates and bag limits

Authority: IC 14-10-2-4; IC 14-22-2-6

Affected: IC 14-22

Sec. 4. (a) An individual must not take more than one (1) deer with each deer license.

(b) The special youth deer season is two (2) consecutive days beginning on the Saturday immediately before October 1 or as approved annually by the director.

(1) The seasonal limit for hunting deer under this subsection is one (1) ~~antlerless~~ deer of either sex.

**(2) A youth hunter who takes an antlered deer under this subsection may not take another antlered deer during the:**

**(A) archery seasons established in subsection (c);**

**(B) firearm season established in subsection (e); or**

**(C) muzzleloader season established in subsection (f).**

~~(2)~~ **(3)** As used in this section, "youth" means an individual who is less than eighteen (18) years of age by the date of the hunt.

~~(3)~~ **(4)** A youth who hunts a deer under this subsection must be accompanied by an adult of at least eighteen (18) years of age who:

**(A)** does not possess a firearm, bow and arrow, or crossbow while in the field;

**(B)** possesses a valid hunting license of any type that is not an apprentice license;

**(C)** must not accompany more than two (2) youth hunters at any one (1) time; and

**(D)** must be in close proximity and able to communicate with the youth hunter at all times.

(c) The archery deer season is as follows:

- (1) Early archery season is from October 1 through the closing day of firearms season as established in subsection (e).
- (2) Late archery season from the first Saturday after the closing day of firearms season as established in subsection (e) through the first Sunday in January.
- (3) An individual must take not more than two (2) deer of which only one (1) may be antlered under this subsection.
- (4) After August 31, 2012, an individual must not take an antlered deer by means of a crossbow.

(d) The urban deer season is as follows:

- (1) From September 15 through the closing day of firearms season as established in subsection (e).
- (2) During the late archery season as established in subsection (c)(2).
- (3) An individual must take not more than four (4) deer of which only one (1) may be antlered under this subsection.
- (4) A deer taken under this subsection does not count against a bag limit for deer set elsewhere in this rule.
- (5) The following areas have been designated as urban deer zones subject to the urban deer season:

(A) The Indianapolis urban deer zone includes the following:

- (i) All of Marion County.
- (ii) That portion of Hendricks County east of State Highway 267.
- (iii) The southeast portion of Boone County as bounded by the following:
  - (AA) State Highway 267.
  - (BB) Interstate Highway 65.
  - (CC) State Highway 32.

(iv) That portion of Hamilton County south of State Highway 32.

(B) The Fort Wayne urban deer zone includes that portion of Allen County lying within the bounds of Interstate Highway 69 and State Highway 469.

(C) The Evansville urban deer zone includes all of Vanderburgh County.

(D) The Lafayette urban deer zone includes the portion of Tippecanoe County north of State Highway 28.

(E) The Gary urban deer zone includes that portion of Lake County north of U.S. Highway 30.

(F) The Crown Point urban deer zone includes that portion of Lake County within the corporate limits of Crown Point.

(G) The Chesterton urban deer zone includes the portion of Porter County north of U.S. Highway 94.

(H) The Michigan City urban deer zone includes that portion of LaPorte County north of U.S. Highway 94.

(I) The Warsaw urban deer zone includes the portion of Kosciusko County within the corporate limits of the city of Warsaw.

(e) The firearms deer season is from the first Saturday after November 11 and continues for an additional fifteen (15) days. An individual must take not more than one (1) antlered deer under this subsection.

(f) The deer hunting season for only using a muzzleloading long gun or muzzleloading handgun is from the first Saturday after the closing day of firearms season as established in subsection (e) and continues for an additional fifteen (15) days. An individual must not take more than one (1) deer of either sex under this subsection.

(g) The season and bag limit for hunting antlerless deer in a designated county, by authority of an extra deer bonus antlerless license, shall be established on an annual basis by a temporary rule authorized by the director. (*Natural Resources Commission; 312 IAC 9-3-4; filed May 12, 1997, 10:00 a.m.: 20 IR 2703; filed Nov 5, 1997, 3:25 p.m.: 21 IR 930; filed Dec 26, 2001, 2:40 p.m.: 25 IR 1530; readopted filed Jul 28, 2003, 12:00 p.m.: 27 IR 286; filed Sep 23, 2004, 3:00 p.m.: 28 IR 538; filed May 25, 2005, 10:15 a.m.: 28 IR 2945; filed Jun 29, 2007, 2:30 p.m.: 20070725-IR-312060272FRA; filed Jul 10, 2007, 2:09 p.m.: 20070808-IR-312060572FRA; filed Sep 6, 2007, 12:20 p.m.: 20071003-IR-312070023FRA; readopted filed Nov 24, 2008, 11:08 a.m.: 20081210-IR-312080672RFA)*

Sprinkles Flower Shop

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English, IN 47118

NATURAL RESOURCES COMM.



This in reference to the Youth Hunting  
SEASON.

Last year, myself & my son, along with  
my granddaughter, at the age of 7, were  
hunting the Youth season.

The second day of hunting, AN  
8 point Buck came within 35 yds  
of our stand.

My Granddaughter Had tears in  
her eyes because she could not  
shoot!

PEOPLE, this is a mistake!  
If they can't take anything but a  
doe what does this say to our  
youth 'about hunting! If they can't  
take horns, then we should not be able to  
also! watching her cry because of this,  
Break my Heart! Turn this around! Don